

REMARKS

Claims 1-55 have been examined. With this amendment, Applicant adds claims 56-58.

Claims 1-58 are all the claims pending in the application.

I. Formalities

Applicant thanks the Examiner for acknowledging the claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119 and confirming receipt of the certified copy of the priority document.

Applicant thanks the Examiner for indicating that the Formal Drawings filed on December 26, 2001 have been accepted.

The Examiner did not initial and return a copy of the form PTO-1449 submitted with the Information Disclosure Statement filed on December 26, 2001. Applicant respectfully requests that the Examiner return the form PTO-1449 with the next Office Action indicating that the reference has been considered.

II. Disposition of the Claims

The Examiner has rejected claims 1, 2, 7, 10, 13-21, 26, 29, 32-41, 45-48, and 51-53 and has objected to claims 3-6, 8, 9, 11, 12, 22-25, 27, 28, 30, 31, 42-44, 49, 50, 54, and 55.

III. Allowable Subject Matter/Objected Claims

Applicant thanks the Examiner for finding allowable subject matter in claims 3-6, 8, 9, 11, 12, 22-25, 27, 28, 30, 31, 42-44, 49, 50, 54, and 55 and for indicating that that these claims would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

Applicant holds rewriting these claims in abeyance until the subject matter regarding their base claims is resolved.

IV. Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

The Examiner has rejected claims 1, 2, 7, 10, 13-21, 26, 29, 32-41, 45-48, and 51-53 under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by Okada et al. (US 6,177,968) [“Okada”]. For at least the following reasons, Applicant traverses the rejection.

As a general matter, the invention in Okada is directed to a liquid crystal device in which orientation of the crystals are controlled so as to switch a transmitted light ON/OFF. Thus, separate visible light emitting elements are necessary as the light source for each liquid crystal element. In contrast, the contrast production member includes the color or contrast emitting mechanisms within each pixel. Each pixel is independently exposed to a driving mechanism (e.g. driving light) so that the ferroelectric material is polarized to emit colors or contrasts.

Claim 1 recites a method for displaying an image that comprises “producing an image contrast in a contrast production member by an influence of the surface charge pattern [from a ferroelectric member].” The Examiner cites certain sections of Okada that allegedly disclose this feature, but does not provide any additional details.

The Examiner’s cited sections disclose a ferroelectric liquid crystal along with other elements that make up a pixel for a liquid crystal display. Applicant respectfully requests that the Examiner clearly communicate findings as required by MPEP § 2106.VII. Applicant submits that there is uncertainty with respect to which elements in Okada allegedly correspond to the “contrast production member” and the “ferroelectric member” because, in the rejections of

claims 13-19 which define the claimed members more particularly, the Examiner cites sections that disclose only electrodes 4 and 7 and electroconductive alignment film 19. These sections are silent with respect to the ferroelectric liquid crystal. Therefore, Applicant requests that the Examiner clarify which features in Okada allegedly correspond to the claimed “ferroelectric member.”

However, to maintain consistency in the claim requirements, as the rejection is best understood, the electrodes 4 and 7 or alignment film 19 must allegedly correspond to the claimed contrast production member. Accordingly, an image contrast must be produced in either the electrodes or the alignment film “by influence of the surface charge pattern” as set forth in claim 1. However, Okada does not disclose or suggest that an image contrast is produced on these elements. In fact, Applicant submits that these elements have to be transparent in order to accurately transmit the image from the ferroelectric liquid crystal and any contrast produced would degrade image quality.

Because claims 20 and 39 recite features similar to claim 1, Applicant submits that these claims are patentable for reasons similar to those given above with respect to claim 1.

Applicant submits that the remaining claims are patentable at least by virtue of their respective dependencies.

In addition, Claims 2 and 21 recite that the ferroelectric member is heated “so as to produce a heat distribution corresponding to the image information in the ferroelectric member.” (emphasis added). The Examiner contends that Example 1 in Okada discloses this feature. Applicant submits that, to the extent Okada discloses a heating process, it is in the context of

manufacturing a display device or testing a display device. There is no disclosure or suggestion that the ferroelectric member is heated to “produce a heat distribution corresponding to the image information.” In fact, a fair reading of the section would suggest that that entire liquid crystal device is heated uniformly, therefore, there is no correspondence between the heat distribution and the image information.

Claims 10, 29 and 52 claim a transparent conductive film that “is transparent to infrared light.” The Examiner contends that it is inherent that substrates 1 and 11 are transparent to infrared light. Applicant submits that “[t]o establish inherency, the extrinsic evidence ‘must make clear that the missing descriptive matter is necessarily present in the thing described in the reference.’” MPEP at page 2100-54. At most, Okada may disclose that the substrates 1 and 11 are transparent to red, green and blue light since the invention relates to a liquid crystal display for displaying images (col. 1, lines 6-8). The Examiner has not provided any reasoning for his contention that the disclosure in Okada makes clear that the substrates are necessarily transparent to infrared light.

Claims 13, 32 and 52 recite that the “contrast production member is constituted by a base in which charged particles are dispersed.” The Examiner’s cited sections, at most, disclose that electroconductive particles are dispersed in electrodes 4 and 7. Applicant submits that, even if, for the sake of argument alone, the electrodes corresponded to the claimed contrast producing member, the electroconductive particles do not necessarily correspond to the claimed charged particles since there is no disclosure that these particles have a charge.

Claims 14, 33 and 53 recite that the “contrast production member is made up of an electrochromic material.” Applicant submits that Okada does not disclose or suggest the use of an electrochromic material.

Claims 15-19, 34-38, 40, 41 and 45-47 define more particularly the properties of the ferroelectric member. The Examiner’s cited sections refer to electrodes 4 and 7 and alignment film 19. Applicant submits that these sections do not disclose or suggest the claimed combinations.

In addition, the Examiner contends that “it is inherent that the oxide [disclosed in these sections] can be viewed as a dopant.” Applicant submits that there is no basis for the Examiner’s contention that the disclosure in Okada makes clear that the oxide is necessarily used as a dopant to absorb infrared light as set forth in claims 18, 37 and 40.

V. New Claims

With this amendment, Applicant adds claims 56-58. Applicant submits that these claims are patentable at least by virtue of their dependency, as well as the features set forth therein.

VI. Conclusion

In view of the above, reconsideration and allowance of this application are now believed to be in order, and such actions are hereby solicited. If any points remain in issue which the Examiner feels may be best resolved through a personal or telephone interview, the Examiner is kindly requested to contact the undersigned at the telephone number listed below.

Amendment Under 37 C.F.R. § 1.111
U.S. Serial No. 10/025,855

Attorney Docket No.: Q66571

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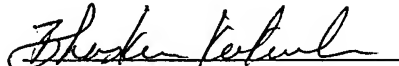
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Date: October 27, 2004